

1                   **OUTBOUND MAIL PIECE TRACKING**  
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3                   **ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION**

4                 The exemplary embodiment of the present invention provides a way for  
5       low-volume mailers to track individual outbound mail pieces, including tracking of  
6       individual U.S. Postal Service FIRST-CLASS MAIL® letters. The exemplary  
7       embodiment of the present invention encodes a unique mail piece tracking  
8       identifier as a CONFIRM® service identifier in a graphic symbology. The unique  
9       mail piece tracking identifier of the exemplary embodiment of the present  
10      invention conforms with requirements of a CONFIRM® service identifier, while at  
11      the same time, provides, for a defined period of time, mail-piece-level uniqueness  
12      for first class and other mail class mail piece tracking.

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